

Vann on 31 years of service to the Washington County Board of Commissioners, office of the County Manager, and the citizens of Washington County, North Carolina. On December 1, 2013, Ms. Vann will retire as Washington County Register of Deeds.

Elaine Vann began her tenure in public service on September 13, 1982 as Assistant Register of Deeds, eventually becoming Certified on August 18, 1994.

On January 3, 1995, Ms. Vann was selected to assume the unexpired term of Washington County's then-Register of Deeds Greta H. Barber. Since then, Ms. Vann has run for election five times and has been elected to serve as Register of Deeds on each occasion. Her nearly 19 years as Washington County's chief recorder of property records and vital statistics information have made her a strong force throughout the county and region.

During her tenure, Ms. Vann served with 24 County Commissioners and seven County Managers. All along, she worked in earnest to implement changes made at the county level and also worked to keep pace with emerging technologies that fostered public disclosure and increased the ease with which citizens accessed information. To that end, she implemented a "paperless" office by scanning and digitizing documents and forms making working with the Register of Deeds uncomplicated and efficient and saving the county scarce resources.

Ms. Vann was a member of the North Carolina Association of Register of Deeds (NCARD) and served District VIII on various NCARD committees. She has proudly served as its District Secretary, Vice-Chair and Chair. This year Ms. Vann was awarded the Shining Star Award by the NCARD at the State Conference in Pinehurst, North Carolina.

A true testament to her active involvement in the community, Ms. Vann served as President of the Pungo River Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary and was the first female board member of the Pungo River Volunteer Fire Department. She is a member of Zion's Chapel Church of Christ in Roper, the Washington County Executive Board of the Southern Albemarle Association, and the Family and Consumer Science Program Committee with the Washington County Cooperative Extension Agency.

Ms. Vann and her husband, John, have two children—a daughter, Erin Vann Gaskill, and a son, Daniel Vann.

Mr. Speaker, the work and contributions of the Honorable Elaine G. Vann will leave a lasting impression on Washington County. I ask my colleagues to join me in offering our sincere appreciation for her 31 years of outstanding and dedicated public service and best wishes upon her retirement.

A BAD DEAL FOR AMERICANS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, four years ago this month, I stood on the House floor to oppose the so-called health care reform bill (ie: Obamacare), stating my firm belief that:

"We can and must reform our health care system and provide better solutions for those

currently uninsured or underinsured. But we must do so without jeopardizing the quality of health care for these currently insured people and families, many of whom will see their own health care access and quality seriously eroded under the bill."

Unfortunately for millions of Americans, as I and many others predicted four years ago, Obamacare is expensive, forcing them to lose their coverage and undermining our world class system of care. The law's implementation is resulting in many patients having less—not more—health care and they have less say in who their doctor is, what procedures and medications are covered, and what hospitals remain in their network.

The President's promise to insured individuals—that "if you like your insurance plan, you will keep it. No one will be able to take that away from you" and "if you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor. Period"—was, simply, a false promise and a foolish one.

We knew then, and are seeing now, that this was not the case. In fact, my colleagues and I raised these concerns during the debate and several of my speeches included my grave concerns that the bill would cause most Americans to lose access to their current health insurance coverage.

At the time of passage, according to the Urban Institute, approximately 90% of the people in my district had health care coverage. Now, the New Jersey Association of Health Plans estimates that in my state alone, 800,000 people—150,000 with individual plans and 650,000 in employer sponsored small group plans—have or will have their coverage disrupted by Obamacare.

In fact, I have been contacted by many of these constituents who are losing their current health care coverage. One constituent from Lakewood wrote: "I just got a letter from [my insurance company] that my private insurance policy is being terminated due to the new Health Care Law requirements. . . . I am struggling middle class citizen. Where is the president's promise that we will be able to keep our policies?"

Another constituent from Fair Haven wrote: "I am a Vietnam veteran. . . . my wife is a 60 year old breast cancer survivor. . . . [Her insurance company] just referred her to a new policy that is almost twice the cost of the one she had."

Similarly, four years ago, I stated: "The bill also guts Medicare Advantage plans, which offer additional coverage to over 11 million seniors—15,983 in my district alone—who choose Medicare Advantage plans as the coverage that best meets their needs."

Mr. Fredrick Thompson from Hamilton commented: "My 96 year old mother-in-law who has lived with us for the past 16 years with Social Security as her only income just received a letter from [her insurance company] canceling her [Medicare Advantage policy]. This policy was cancelled due to new standards imposed by the Affordable Care Act (ACA). A new policy will increase her cost by 83% plus add a deductible that did not exist in the original policy."

The impact on future Medicare Advantage enrollment is unclear but the costs have increased for seniors, like Mr. Thompson's mother-in-law, many of who can ill afford a higher cost of living.

Many more of my constituents have seen their costs rise dramatically and others are

fearful that they will soon receive a cancellation notice in the mailbox stating they are being pushed off their current plans and must find a new, more expensive plan on a website that doesn't work and does not appear to have the ability to keep their required personal data safe and secure. This is unacceptable.

The impact of Obamacare on small businesses is also troubling—and was predicted. One business owner in my district, April Zay from Hamilton, wrote to me: "I am a small business owner in Mercer County NJ. I am concerned about the effect of the Affordable Care Act on my business and family. . . . I have been trying my best to keep my business afloat, but with the cost of health plans and the loss of revenue is putting my livelihood at risk."

Since the latest recession, small businesses accounted for 67 percent of the net new jobs in this country. They are the engine of a sustained job market and a recovery. Controlling costs and making healthcare policies affordable for these small businesses should be our focus. Unfortunately, Obamacare—both its insurance mandate's sticker price and the crippling taxes on individuals and businesses—incentivizes part-time employment and accelerates the trend away from employer sponsored plans.

My record—on Medicare, Community Health Centers, the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), Veterans health care, and children with special needs—demonstrates that I remain fully committed to ensuring the federal government plays an appropriate role and provides a health care safety net for those in need of support.

The solutions we put forward during the debate on Obamacare to replace it with responsible health care reform can provide credible health insurance coverage for everyone, strengthening the health care safety net, and incentivizing quality, innovation, and prevention. Reforming the private health insurance market to eliminate denials for pre-existing conditions and lifetime caps and promoting portability between jobs and geographic areas, including across state lines, are proposals I supported and have continued to support. I also support modernizing the tax code to promote affordability and individual control and provide assistance to low-income and middle-class families who seek insurance but cannot now afford the cost.

The administration's temporary decision to allow insurance companies to grandfather in existing plans is not sufficient to stop the bleeding. Obamacare must be suspended and replaced. Suspending and replacing Obamacare would fulfill the President's promise: If you like your insurance plan, you can keep it. Then we can work on real reform that puts patients first, lowers costs and advances solutions rather than creates new problems.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LANCE
CORPORAL CALEB POWER
YOUNG MARINE UNIT'S EFFORTS
TO PROMOTE RED RIBBON WEEK

HON. ROBERT J. WITTMAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of the Lance Corporal